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THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL/CONFERENCE
OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF UNIVERSITY COMPOSERS:
THE COMPOSER IN THE UNIVERSITY REEXAMINED

LISA R. DOMINICK

Louisiana experienced a burst of musical excitement when the Eighteenth Annual Festival/Conference of the American Society of University Composers was hosted by the Louisiana State University School of Music in Baton Rouge. The conference, which spanned February 23-27, was held in conjunction with LSU's Thirty-Eighth Festival of Contemporary Music, an annual event founded in 1944 by LSU Professor Helen Gunderson with the intention of providing public concerts of twentieth-century music, including "classics," "avant-garde" works and LSU student compositions.

The conference exploded into existence with an exuberant concert by the LSU Wind Ensemble under the direction of Frank Wickes. The high points were undoubtedly Richard Brooks' *Collage* and the spectacular *Band Piece (Chromatic Fantasy)* by Bruce Taub, both of which were received enthusiastically by the large audience. The quintessentially romantic *Collage* played upon three ideas, culled from the first four measures of the piece: four chordal sonorities, a crescendo-diminuendo "silhouette," and a rapid "riff" in the marimba. Incessantly repeated six-note segments of the D-major ascending and C-major descending scales, derived from the marimba riff, propelled the work forward through a dense frenzy of material. *Band Piece*, intended as an homage to composer Ross Lee Finney on his seventy-fifth birthday, set up a consistent momentum dramatically terminated by stupendous, reiterated sonorities. The program's two remaining ASUC compositions, *Variations on a Theme of Guillaume de Machaut* by David Keane and *Chromatic Suite Concertante* by Robert Rollin,

politely "pillaged" the musical past; in Keane's composition, material from Machaut's *Messe de Notre Dame* was mutated through the application of various twentieth-century techniques, while in Rollin's piece, American traditional tunes were blended, Ives-like, into a celebratory musical melting pot.

The succès fou of the festival was Larry Austin's stunning *Canadian Coastlines: Canonic Fractals for Musicians and Computer Band*, performed with élan by members of the Baton Rouge Symphony Chamber Orchestra. (*Canadian Coastlines* has met with success elsewhere, as well; John Cage so admired the piece that he commissioned Austin to write the score for Merce Cunningham's *Coast Zone*, premiered in New York City on 18 March 1983.) Eight musicians performed four voices of an eight-voice canon; the remaining four voices were played as "digital synthesizer sequences pre-recorded on tape, each voice entering in turn in exact melodic/rhythmic imitation." The eight voices each followed a different tempo; the musicians were fed differing tempo click tracks through headphones, timed so that the eight parts melodically and rhythmically coincided five times during the piece. Melodic contour, interval choice, textural density, dynamic change, and rhythmic design were determined by a graph of the Canadian coastline, hence the title. Another canonic composition performed on the same program was *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* by Robert Newell; the title, taken from Vedic Sanskrit, is an aphorism expressive of the Eastern philosophical precept that one fundamental, omnipresent unity (*Brahman* in Hinduism, *Tao* in Taoism) underlies the multiplicity of phenomena, a tenet also held by the psychologist C.G. Jung, Albert Einstein, and the composers John Cage and Ton de Leeuw, among others. In Newell's work, the canonic principle was used as a unifying device in a musical manifestation of the maxim expressed in the composition's title; the resultant sound was quite consonant, at times even tonal. Also performed on the program were Elliott Schwartz's *Texture*, envisaged as an étude for college-level orchestras on a variety of notational, improvisational, and textural techniques, and Leo Kraft's playful *Strata* for three instrumental

groups (three winds, trombone, four strings), which focused on the interactions of varying tempos and character considerations; both works were warmly received.

The program performed by the instrumental ensemble Tone Road Ramblers was one of the festival's finest. The hypnotic, minimalist *Threnody II* by Michael Udow was my second-favorite composition of the conference (behind Larry Austin's piece). The commencing section was strongly reminiscent of Korean music both in timbre and texture: rhythmically nonsynchronous layers of persistently recurrent motives piled up over a repetitive, insistent foundational rhythm. The music later became timbrally more Western-sounding, and at one point featured clapping noises. Morgan Powell's *Duet II*, a powerful play of composed and improvised actions and reactions between a solo clarinetist and five other players, was as suspense-filled as a mystery thriller. Numerous silences separated a wide range of musical gestures, including one bit that sounded like a rhythmically out-of-phase Dixieland band. Jack Fonville's *An afTenooN with AnRon at the cafe* was jazzy, lurching, and humorous. *Phyllotaxis* by Robert Fletcher employed astoundingly attractive vertical sonorities; its title is from the word for the distribution of leaves on a stem, which is geared to the Fibonacci series used to govern the temporal and tonal relationships of the limited materials of the composition.

As a pianist, I was delighted that the nineteenth-century king Fleisher employed astoundingly attractive vertical sonorities; its title is from the word for the distribution of leaves on a stem, which is geared to the Fibonacci series used to govern the temporal and tonal relationships of the limited materials of the composition.

As a pianist, I was delighted that the nineteenth-century king of instruments was well represented in both measure and stylistic scope. *Two Octave Etudes* for solo piano by Alex Lubet, an eloquent exegesis on "second consecutive non-parallel octaves," elicited praise from the pianists in the audience despite a somewhat slipshod performance by pianist Michael Rickman. The first étude, dedicated to the memory of Sri B.S. Subrahmanya, in whose home the composer

stayed during a visit to Bangalore, India in 1975, was redolent of the expository techniques of the North Indian *dhrupad*, one of the oldest Hindustani vocal genres still performed today. In the improvisatory *alap* that serves as an introductory section to the main body of the *dhrupad*, the *rasa* (character) of the governing *raga* (melodic mode) is slowly established through pitch, motivic, and registral exploration; similarly, the commencement of the first *étude* featured the persistent reiteration of a single pitch, around which emerged and moved recurrent motives, all in the same high register. Descending registral expansion was gradually effected until, finally, the entire keyboard was utilized.

Sonata for Piano by James D. Wagoner and *Upstance and Bringforth for Solo Piano* by Harold Wofford, both performed with professional verve and technical flair by pianist Willis Deloney, were highly-charged, virtuosic compositions in the lush pianistic tradition of the nineteenth century, grandiose enough to hold their own among the surrounding compositions for dance and tape. Wofford's piece was uncomfortably languid and voluptuous, whereas Wagoner respectfully restrained his emotional generosity within a more tightly-packed construction. John Downey's *Portrait No. 1* for solo piano, performed by the composer, was dense with aggressive gesture and tortured testimony, the epitome of expressionistic groping. I was alternately embarrassed by its psychologically revelatory bursts of feeling, and angered that I was forced to emphatically share in the composer's Freudian obsessions. Its pianistic bombast and excessive length left me weary and drained; however, I must admit to a long-standing prejudice against compositional confessions. The fastidious language of Frank Stemper's *Four Piano Pieces* for solo piano, performed by Stemper on the same program, was, in contrast to Downey's language, lean and austere; Stemper's clear pianistic tone and precise attention to an array of articulation types enhanced the stringency of the music.

The compositions for two pianists were among the best offerings of the conference; particularly impressive was Dennis Kam's

piece for two pianos, *The Epistemology of Delicate Time in Blue Three*, meticulously and sensitively performed by Daniel and Boyce Sher. Kam said that the piece represented a "new direction" in his music, a turn toward "clear aural perceptibility" through "simple and direct musical statements," as well as an exploration into the subjective experience of time (as implied in the title). Most fascinating was the almost palpable rhythmic and motivic dialogue or communicative interplay that transpired between the pianos, admirably and precisely rendered by the Shers. The Shers also performed Roger Brigg's composition for two pianos, *In the Midst of Calmes*, a delicate, haunting work featuring trance-inducing, minimalistic motivic repetition; as the piece unfolded, the two pianos gradually moved in and out of rhythmic phase or synchronization.

Thomas Moor's *Metamorphosis*, a virtuosic work for piano, four hands, was brilliantly performed by duo-pianists Genevieve Chinn and Allen Brings, for whom the piece was composed. The work is indeed a "metamorphosis" of Webern's *Symphony* Op. 21; the title might also refer to the work's constant alternation of quiet and single tones with energetic outbursts of massive sound events, which produced the effect of continual transformation. *Space: Inner/Outer* by Michael F. Hunt, performed by Phil Young at the piano keyboard and Judith Geiger on the piano strings, moved through time with dream-like stealth, the illusory quality enhanced by scrapings on the strings eerily indicative of the cry of a wounded elephant. Small, recurrent motives protruded from widely-spaced, reiterated chords performed on the keyboard, answered by various pluckings and scrapings on the strings inside of the piano. *Light Years for Piano and Electromagnetic Tape* by Arthur Welwood was to have been performed with a prepared piano, but university regulations irrationally prohibited this, to the indignation of the performer, Estrid Eklof Welwood, the composer, and audience members. The work was conceived as a dialogue between the piano, which represented the human *persona*, and the tape sounds, which depicted the soul (thoughts, emotions, moods) of our galaxy.

A large number of wind compositions were scheduled throughout the conference. The highly virtuosic *Soliloquies for B-flat and A Clarinet* by Violet Archer and *Realms (B-flat clarinet solo)* by John van der Slice were both admirably executed by clarinetist Charles West. West also performed Milton Babbitt's *My Ends Are My Beginnings* for B-flat and bass clarinets, sixteen minutes of tedious motivic intricacies almost unrelieved by superficial change or contrast (except for the changes of instruments); because of Babbitt's eminence, I assume that my perception of the piece (shared, however, by many of my colleagues) was due to underdeveloped auditory expertise or lack of multiple hearings.

James Chaudoir's *Cithaerias Esmeralda*, performed by flutist Jean Rickman, was an elegant, charming, and occasionally humorous portrayal of the butterfly named in the title of the piece. In *Fiona's Flute*, also performed by Rickman, composer Jack Behrens managed to sustain a high degree of interest with a limited amount of recurrent motivic material, which was derived from a set of pitches associated with the name Fiona Wilkerson, for whom the work was composed. *Intermezzo* by Samuel Pellman, a lyrical pastoral for two flutes performed by Ruth Witmer and Phyllis Yarborough, was a delightful depiction of rustic reminiscences.

Charles Bestor's gorgeous *Lyric Variations for Oboe with Viola and Tape* was beautifully performed by oboist Earnest Harrison and violist Jerzy Kosmala. The fascinating, often imitative interplay among the piece's three constituents was consummately manipulated, and the motivic repetition of the work aided accessibility. Two oboe works, *Capriccio-Variant 2* for solo oboe by Derek Healey and *Prelude and Fugue for Solo Oboe* by Larry McFatter, both performed by oboist Perry Trosclair, were inequitably sandwiched between two grandiloquent compositions for tape and dance, rendering fair appraisal difficult; their respective virtues did not seem sufficient to distinguish them from among their compositional surroundings.

The compositions for solo violin and string quartet were disappointing to the extreme. The violin *Fantasy* by James Greeson,

performed with acumen by violinist Dinos Constantinides, effused expressionistic palaver remindful of the murky *maquillage* of American abstract-expressionist painting. The expressivity of *Sonata for Violin Unaccompanied* by Jackson Hill, also performed by Constantinides, was more competently dispensed, refreshingly relieved as it was at times by dry pointillism and moments of humor. Of the five string quartets comprising the seventh program of the conference, all performed by the estimable New Times String Quartet, only George Heussenstamm's *String Quartet* Op. 15 rose above mediocrity.

The brass compositions held more promise. Allen Brings' *Quintet*, performed by the LSU-Southern Faculty Brass Quintet, reflected "principles of dramaturgy" in its Thea Musgrave-like imaginary theatrical personifications and sectional characterizations, conveyed through particular combinations of tempo, dynamic, articulation, and timbre types. *Divertimento for Brass Quintet* by Hugo Norden, performed by the same ensemble, was a cheerful, light-hearted piece based on the harmonies in the five lines of Bach's chorale "Herr, wie du willst, so schick's mit mir," and featuring a recurrent three-note motive in the second and fourth of its four movements. *Music for Two Trumpets and Piano* by William Alexander, performed by David Hobbs and Mike Ruppelt, trumpets, and Eugene Cline, piano, contained motives of fourths and fifths set into a freely tonal atmosphere. Don Freund's *Four Pieces for Horn Quartet*, performed by David Adcock, Luke Sellers, Julie Giroux, and Kevin Andry as the last piece of the "Music for Brass" program, was a luxuriant yet virile work. *Lyric Piece for Trumpet and Harp* by Richard Hervig, performed by James West, trumpet, and Hye Yun Chung, harp, on a later program, was an entrancing two-instrument dialogue of ethereal lyricism.

The vocal offerings included settings of poems for accompanied voice, choral compositions, and two one-act operas. My favorite vocal composition was Sanford Hinderlie's *Peace Is a Fiction of our Faith*, a sensational work descriptive of the "constant battle between true peace and all else that fights against it," the text of which is by Emily Dickinson. The performing ensemble—soprano,

clarinet, cello, percussion, synthesizer, and lights (the lights were not used in this performance)—generated the electric excitement of a rock group; the music was popularistic in its use of repetition and ostinati and in its considerable volume as well. Singer Therese Costes enunciated the text with an array of whispers, shouts, spoken words, *gilssandi*, and sung sounds. Ethnicity was tenuously approximated in Orlando J. Garcia's setting of a Peruvian Quechua Indian poem, *In This Darkness*, and Alexander E. Sidorowicz's *Five Ancient Chinese Poems*, both of which were sung by soprano Scharmal Schrock. Sidorowicz's work was structured in pyramidal or arch form, with the third poem, *Dreams*, as its musical and textual apex. The movements were linked textually (through recurrent references to dreams and musical instruments and textual restatements), texturally (the third and fourth movements are both thin in texture), and motivically (through the repetition of a rising set of diminishing intervals). Sidorowicz failed, however, to adequately enter into the mind-set of the Chinese poems; the overtly European structural treatment, in particular the use of climactic constructions, is inconsonant with Oriental philosophical thought, and rendered the poems inert and ineffectual. In contrast, A. B. Marcus's surrealist *Song Cycle* on poems by Dylan Thomas and Warren Darcy's *Songs of Darkness* on poems by Shelley, Yeats, Fletcher, and Axlerod, both beautifully sung by soprano Sandra Kungle, were sensitive musical extensions of their respective texts; Darcy's music dramatically detailed the compressed spiritual fervor and oppressive terror of the poems without accompanying emotional excess. Also to be commended is M. Donald MacInnis's *Death by Water* for soprano and woodwind quintet, superbly sung by soprano Constance Navratil, the text of which was taken from T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

Of the two operas, Dinos Constantinides's *Intimations*, staged by the LSU Opera Theatre under the direction of Richard Aslanian, was the more successful in the conveyance of its limited subject material. The opera's cast of two included a blind woman and a young girl, both lamenting the recent demise of the male head-of-the-


household, who was poisoned, presumably by accident, by the blind woman. Tension rose as the two nervously awaited the arrival of the dead man's wife, still unaware of the tragedy. The blind woman's struggle to contain her mounting hysteria was marvelously echoed in the terse, tautly-constructed music provided by the instrumental ensemble of violin, clarinet, harp, and percussion. Tom Benjamin's opera *The Rehearsal*, staged by the River City Opera Workshop under the direction of Eugene Cline, music director, and James Jordan, stage director, portrayed a love triangle among the constituents of a small opera company busily engaged with the rehearsal of Mozart's *The Impresario*; the themes of "competition, love, and renunciation" around which *The Rehearsal* was constructed were echoed in the Mozart scenes. While I found the plot easily comprehended, many of the audience members confessed to an inability to follow the story's twisting path. The pathos of unrequited love was humorously relaxed by the incongruous bits of scenes culled from the opera under rehearsal, the Mozartean style of which contrasted effectively with the prevailing dramatic style of the work as a whole.

The choral compositions were performed by the LSU A Cappella Choir under the direction of Victor Klimash. *Dona Nobis Pacem* by Ann Silsbee was the most vocally-experimental composition of the group, and reportedly caused the choir consternation during rehearsal; the performance, however, was quite effective. The music unfolded in several successive arcs, each of which began simply and at a low dynamic level, continued with an intensification of material and dynamic level to a peak level of density and excitement, and terminated abruptly in a descending vocal slide or sudden silence. Vocal effects included drone-like chanting and speaking, often simultaneously executed at a multitude of non-synchronous rhythms and tempos. More conservative but pleasantly accessible and appropriate for church performance were *Two Psalms for Mixed Chorus and Instrumental Ensemble* by Diane Thome and the sunny, Renaissance-like *Laudate Pueri* by John Russell. Hubert Bird's conservative but very pretty *A Lark Sang* moved with majestic, dream-like slowness and

natural ease. David Ward-Steinman's choral suite *Of Wind and Water* coupled meticulous choral writing with scintillating, shimmering percussion and piano accompaniment.

Of the electronic compositions, my favorite was Reed Holmes's marvelous, minimalistic *Moire*, an ebullient, energetic work for tape and dancers, enthusiastically interpreted by choreographer Gaye Meyer and the LSU Dance Theatre Dancers. Don Wilson's *Symphony No. 1 for Electronic Instruments* sported interplay among timbres imitative of traditional instruments, nonimitative timbres, and colors resulting from mixtures of these timbres; although the piece was generally acclaimed, many murmured that it was uncomfortably loud. Sylvia Pengilly's *Sonus Fluens*, an electronic work accompanied by non-geometric laser figures, was also well-received. While Barton McLean's *The Last Ten Minutes*, performed in conjunction with his lecture "An Exploration of Gesture as a Primary Composing Tool," may have been well-conceived, the distressing nature of its subject matter—"the terror, anguish, poignancy, and humanity of the last ten minutes of the human race on earth during the holocaust"—and the incongruous morning hour for such horrific meditations, raised an almost universal cry of complaint among the members of the audience.

The 1982-83 ASUC-SESAC Student Composition Awards were presented to James Boros (first prize) and David Kowalski (second prize). Boros's winning composition, *Quintet No. 2* for violin, flute, clarinet, cello, and piano, provoked prodigious protest from the audience; Larry Austin yelled out "Bad piece!", while more polite personages confined themselves to dazed looks and statements such as "I don't know how that piece won." Boros's teacher at Rutgers University, Gerald C. Chenoweth, was represented at the festival with a performance of his *Five Bagatelles for Clarinet and Piano*, an elegant but inconsequential work deserving of its title (bagatelle = trifle).

 Throughout the conference there was talk among the composers of a move in their music toward "conservatism," by which was meant a more pervasive use of recognizable melodies, intervals of

fourths and fifths, recurrent structures, and a tendency toward modality and tonality, all of which were evident in the music performed. Many of the works held programmatic or philosophical connotations. Few fringe pieces were performed, a fact partially reflective, of course, of the performers' tastes; the compositions regarded most avant-garde by the composers were the relatively few minimalistic works, which were generally scorned by the older festival constituents. That serialism still continues to exert attraction was evident in a number of compositions; its use, however, was often tempered by the melodic and tonal tendencies listed above. Most interesting to me was the frequent use of dialogue or colloquy among instruments or other compositional components.

In his ASUC keynote speech, "The Composer in the University Revisited," Milton Babbitt addressed what are perhaps his favorite (certainly recurrent) topics with characteristic wit and aplomb. Rapid-fire but good-natured invectives were hurled against those alembicated academicians who have the audacity to adjudge the "university composer" an anomaly or miscreant. The insufferable insouciance of university performers and musicologists toward their composer-colleagues was fervently decried. The regnant distaste for contemporary music among the general public was declared lamentable. Babbitt, however, did not address the sources of and possible solutions to this regrettable state of affairs. Perhaps insight, albeit one-faceted, can be gained from a situational comparison of the university composer and the university visual artist.

The plight of the university composer parallels that of the university visual artist in both type and provenance. Neither is conceded the academic respect normally accorded to their university colleagues in scientific, mathematical, and historical fields. The blame for this lies partly in the nineteenth-century romantic myth of the composer/artist as genius, the "great man" theory that is unfortunately even now perpetuated by all too many musicologists and art historians. Although the continuance of this cursed cult of exaltation may benefit a few (Stockhausen, Picasso), those of less than demigod

status must suffer the stigma of comparison, their worth adumbrated by the shadow of the great. While a few scientists and mathematicians are so revered (Curie, Einstein), fields other than music, art, and perhaps literature have not sustained the "great man" theory. As a result, many academicians dismiss the university composer or visual artist as a failed genius, without thinking to apply the same criteria to themselves.

The academic credibility of the composer and visual artist is perhaps also hampered by the perception on the part of their colleagues that current compositional and artistic practices are not governed by any definite rules of "better" and "worse." While research in many fields follows an established route or process the departure from which is unacceptable, compositional and visual artistic work has no such determinable norm; although compositions and paintings can be distinguished as serial or minimalistic, abstract-expressionistic or photo-realistic, one trend or type cannot be said to be "better" than the other, and deviation is often encouraged in the guise of originality. Indeed, composers and visual artists are extremely hesitant to criticize or discommend the work of a *confrère*; this was particularly the case at the recent ASUC conference. Whereas musicologists and theorists openly and often vehemently attack work that is perceived as poor or incompetent at the meetings of their respective societies, the composers at the ASUC meeting (with the exception of Larry Austin) only voiced objections in the smallest whispers to their closest friends; in fact, in his speech Babbitt specifically beseeched the composers to lay aside their criticisms in the spirit of comradeship. Petty criticism is not to be commended, of course, but one wonders what might result if, in the manner of other academic conferences, time were scheduled after each ASUC performance for queries and comments.

According to Babbitt, university composers have endeavored to effectuate academic respectability primarily through the written word; numerous composers produce scholarly explications of their work, imitative of the academic paper. Here, the situations of the university composer and visual artist diverge; articles and papers by

art historians abound, while the number of musicologists writing on current compositional practices is ridiculously minuscule. Why this is so, I do not know; to the deprecation of musicologists, the composer must carry his own torch, if it is to be carried at all. While many composers have developed adequate verbal and writing skills, it must be remembered that their primary medium is not the written word (a fact painfully in evidence during the paper-reading sessions). Moreover, musical articles are often excruciatingly boring in comparison with their livelier counterparts in the visual arts, and not only because they are not written by professional writers; for some unfathomable reason, many musical analyses eschew all but the driest of **technical considerations**, whereas analyses of visual art more typically include philosophical, social, aesthetic, and critical as well as technical materials, frequently presented in a more journalistic than strictly scholarly style.

The decried rampant public aversion to contemporary music is a phenomenon I believe not encountered by contemporary visual art. **While it is true that current practices in the visual arts often incur public derision, contemporary art is avidly collected by many individuals as well as by museums, and exhibitions of such art attract large audiences and extensive media attention.** The reasons for this are varied. The collectibility of visual art renders it potentially profitable financially. Art historians, museum curators, and gallery owners promote contemporary art with an enthusiasm not matched in the feeble efforts of orchestra conductors, performers, and musicologists on behalf of contemporary music. Many have reasonably argued that visual art is inherently more accessible than music; it can be as justifiably postulated, however, that **the particular modes through which twentieth-century visual artistic sensibility is expressed are more approachable than those chosen by composers.** In the cases of art and architecture, there has been a general deflection to simplicity. Although the bourgeois individual may not have liked the arid architectural boxes of Mies van der Rohe and the geometric suprematism of Malevitch, and no doubt mourned the demise of Victorian

magnificence and sentimentality, the technical means through which the new artistic values were expressed were at least simple and straightforward enough for him to comprehend, once the shock of the new wore off. Music, on the other hand, became in many instances increasingly cerebral; for the potential bourgeois appreciator, Stella's colorful shaped canvases are more easily comprehended than are the complicated cantations and calculations of Babbitt's music. While there are, of course, exceptions to this thesis, it is nevertheless generally valid.

If one holds, as many do, that "serious" music is for the initiated, discriminating few, then technical complexity is not an issue for concern; here, the only problems are in the determination of the constituency of the fortunate elect, and the provision for their musical pleasure. For those who believe that music should receive the public enthusiasm now accorded contemporary visual art, the situation is more abstruse. At least two possible, though divergent, courses emerge, the success of both of which is highly dependent on the availability of the music to the public: 1) Music continues its technically complicated and labyrinthine path; the public is subjected to extensive education in the belief that education will lead to pleasurable consumption; 2) Music becomes at least superficially, if not essentially, simpler technically, and perhaps, like Pop Art, even popularistic, in the belief that public consumption and pleasure are more likely to be engendered by simplicity than complexity. Objections can be made to both courses. The first course, although logically the most appealing to the composer, is at the same time most chauvinistic; while it is supposedly reasonable for the university composer to exact academic esteem from his colleagues, is it rational to demand his pleasure as well? Certainly the composer feels no obligation to enjoy or understand the work of the university physicist, mathematician, or even historian; who among us regularly attends and enjoys the presentation of geological papers? One could, of course, answer that the comparison is unfair because music, as an art form, differs in nature from the sciences, but in so doing would heighten the disparity that is in

part the source of the composer's lack of academic recognition and respect. The second course is objectionable in that it limits the compositinal choices available to the composer.

☰ Netherlands is one country in which concerts of twentieth-century music, particularly contemporary Dutch music, draw relatively large numbers of nonmusicians. This admirable situation was effected primarily through the conscious efforts of a small number of composers with a three-pronged approach: **politics, propaganda, and popularization.** The composers petitioned the government for financial support in all areas of contemporary composition—publication, distribution, performance, recording, and promotion—with the fervor of religious zealots. They actively courted media attention, inundating the editorial pages with letters and infiltrating the newspapers as critics. They launched a massive appeal to the public, linking themselves with popular political movements and promoting gigantic outdoor musical extravaganzas in public parks. **They created performance situations redolent of rock concerts, and alternated more complicated or abstruse music with popularistic improvisational or minimalistic music at multimedia musical events.** As a result, contemporary Dutch music now has a cult following of considerable magnitude, composed primarily of young, educated, politically liberal, pseudo-intellectual nonmusicians for whom appreciation of the artistic avant-garde (music, film, dance, theatre, the visual arts) is a requisite of social acumen or "cool." Although originally enticed by the musical avant-garde for what composers might well consider the wrong reasons, many of these young appreciators have since developed a true interest in contemporary music, an interest that has widened to include abstruse as well as popularistic music and that, hopefully, will continue throughout their lives.

The United States, I believe, has a potential musical audience of like constituency, an audience just now being tapped by musicians such as Laurie Anderson. The university composer works in the midst of a conceivable musical hotbed, the college campus; the decision to cultivate, however, must be his.